

## WEEK 3: MINDFULNESS: TRYING ON DIFFERENT SHAPES

### MINDFULNESS OF MOOD AND POSTURE

Can the shape of our body affect our mood, emotions, and ability to act?  
Let's experiment with assuming a few body shapes to find out.

1. Start by standing with your feet apart, arms at your sides, with your palms facing in toward your thighs. Take as long as you need to center yourself. When you feel fully present, bring your attention to your hands. Keep your awareness on them as you slowly raise them in front of you, and as you do turn your palms upward. What subtle changes to your mood or emotions do you notice?
2. Go back to your original position. Settle yourself again. Now, round your shoulders forward. Drop your head so your chin is on your chest. How does this shape make you feel? After a few moments, pull your shoulders back while you raise your head to its normal position. Notice the difference in your mood and outlook?
3. Let's try another shape: While standing, lift your chin so that your head is thrown back. A whole new feeling is present. Return your chin to its familiar position. Feel that?
4. There are many ways to illustrate the power—sometimes quite subtle—that our body shape has on our mood. Try hardening your eyes by tightening the muscles around them, and staring hard. After a few moments let your eyes soften. A very subtle change in your mood takes place.
5. It's also like that with your chin and lips. Tighten them as much as you can. Now, let them soften. Feel it?